THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

August 19, 1968

MEMO FOR MR. ROSTOW

In view of the unusual redeployment yesterday of 200 Soviet Tactical Air Force fighters back to the Czech border, the attached message takes on added significance.

David Y. McManis
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AIR LAND OPERATIONS BY AN-12 AND AN-2 AIRCRAFT. AN UNIDENTIFIED GSGS MOTORIZED RIFLE DIVISION ALSO WAS REPORTED ENROUTE TO PRAGUE VIA SLANY. CONTINUOUS FLIGHTS OF AN-12 TO THE PRAGUE AREA ARE DELIVERING TROOPS AND EQUIPMENT TO INCLUDE PT-76 TANKS AND DTR-40 PERSONNEL CARRIERS. OTHER CZECH AREAS WHICH ARE PROBABLY UNDER SOVIET CONTROL INCLUDE ASK, BRNO, MORAVSKA OSTRAVA, PRIBRAM, AND ZATEC.

THE SOVIETS HAVE IMPRESSED SOME CIVILIAN CSSR TRUCKS FOR TROOP TRANSPORT. ONLY SPORADIC SMALL ARMS FIRE HAD BEEN REPORTED BY 01515 HOURS PRAGUE LOCAL TIME; HOWEVER, AT 0755 HOURS INTERMITTENT SMALL ARMS FIRE WITH HEAVY SUSTAINED AUTOMATIC WEAPONS FIRE WAS REPORTED IN THE VICINITY OF THE SOLE RADIO TRANSMITTER IN PRAGUE REMAINING IN GOVERNMENT HANDS.

REPORTS BY RELIABLE COLLATERAL SOURCES PLACE OBSERVED SOVIET TRANSPORT SORTIES AT 250. IT IS THEREFORE LIKELY THAT THE ACTUAL NUMBER OF TRANSPORT SORTIES INTO CZECHOSLOVAKIA SINCE 29/2 3602 IS SUBSTANTIALLY IN EXCESS OF 300.

SO FAR TAF EAST GERMANY APPEARS TO BE INVOLVED IN WHAT COULD BE CONSIDERED SUPPORT MISSIONS: TROOP SPOTTING, AIR DEFENSE COVER, AND PROBABLE CLOSE IN GROUND FORCES SHUTTLING. THREE INDEPENDENT RECONNAISSANCE REGIMENTS APPARENTLY HAVE BEEN CONDUCTING SURVEILLANCE FLIGHTS BOTH NEAR AND OVER THE CZECH BORDER. T0000 FIGHTER DIVISION AT MERSEBURG HAS APPARENTLY SUPPLIED THE AIR DEFENSE COVER. NO ESTIMATE OF THE TOTAL NUMBER OF FIGHTER AND FIGHTER BOMBER AIRCRAFT THAT HAVE FLOWN INTO CZECHOSLOVAKIA CAN BE MADE AT THIS TIME; HOWEVER.

IN ADDITION, A RELIABLE OBSERVER HAS REPORTED SOVIET FIGHTERS LANDING AT CZECHOSLOVAK AIRFIELDS

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